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ETHEL'S LOVERS.

BY ETTA W. PIERCE

CHAPTER III.

It was a lonely place. Outside the ledges of shelving rock the sea thundered hoarsely from the beginning unto the end, the gulls wheeled and screamed, the wind blew salt scents up the glittering shore. A stretch of gray beach, with an old hulk buried in the sand; a low horizon, dotted by the white sails of the fishermen's crafts and now and then a great ship going by with her canvas floating and fading in the distance like a stately dream; a pale green reach of marshes, the dreary cones of sand hills belting the western curve of the bay; the hotel itself perched upon the crags, like a gull's nest, and overlooking the sea's commotion, and the long desolate shore—that was the Guenthers' retreat.

They had been there for weeks. The quiet hotel was never crowded—no one knew them—no one cared who they were. Now and then, however, a transient visitor had his curiosity badly piqued—they were a party that could hardly fail to attract attention from strangers; but the landlord and the quiet hamlet people accepted them for what they saw them to be—an elderly lady, who wore point-lace ruffles and petted a lap dog; a dark-haired girl, with beautiful eyes, who was often seen more frequently upon the beach than elsewhere, and a gray-haired gentleman, an invalid, whose pale, restless race haunted them by its strange sadness. Two servants completed the party.

Why were they there? Why did they remain there with no prospect of return? Aunt Dilloway fretted over these questions night and day. Sea air did not seem to agree with Ethel. She had grown pale and silent; and no wonder, Aunt Dilloway thought, for her father's drain upon her time and attention was ceaseless.

"Really," said the worthy old lady, "if you will only tell me what this dreadful matter is, Ethel, I will bear anything; but here you are killing yourself"—

Ethel interrupted her with a quick gesture.

"Don't, Aunt Dilloway; I am well—I am happy as I ever can be again—don't say one word to papa, if you love me. We must stay here."

And so the days deepened into summer. Fate works out her own problems—it is only for us to be patient and wait.

One summer morning Miss Guenther sat on the piazza of the Crags with her hands folded across a volume of "Owen Meredith," looking out with large, wistful eyes upon the sea. The sunlight sifted down through the poplars and decked the dark hair and the rich morning dress of pink cashmere sliding down to the Andalusian foot with a hovering, tender touch. It was a nice place to dream in. Everything about the place was unusually quiet. The mist had folded away from the marshes and sea in great gossamer clouds. A few fishermen's boats in the distance—a little train of idlers on the beach, a knot of ladies going to bowl, a tinkle of the piano in the parlor—that was all. So Ethel Guenther sat watching the sunny dance of the blue, restless face haunted them by its on her book and her thoughts far away.

"Nea, can you see the sea?" said a little voice, coming with a sound of pattering feet across the piazza.

"Don't run, Blossom--yes, I see it."

"And the gulls, Nea—are there any gulls?" eagerly.

Ethel's dream was broken. Two shadows fell between her and the sunlight—she rose up. The long curls, the spiritual face of Daisy Halstead, as she stood clinging to "Nea," in her loving helplessness, then a quick exclamation—an outstretched hand that was not Daisy's.

"Miss Guenther!" cried Erne Halstead.

"Good morning," said Miss Guenther. Regally cool. Erne enjoyed it—more especially as the jeweled hand trembled perceptibly as it met his own.

"I had not anticipated this pleasure," he said.

"We have been here several weeks," answered Miss Guenther, fluttering her white fingers through the leaves of "Owen Meredith."

"Vaunce informed me that you had left town," remarked Halstead, carelessly; "then, too, I called."

"And found a deserted habitation?" with a flush.

"Yes, to my disappointment. Daisy, you are tired."

He took her upon his knee, tender as a woman. The child was so thin and pale that the reason of his presence there with her was very evident to Miss Guenther. She leaned from his arms with her lily face uplifted.

"Kiss me," she said, wistfully, to Ethel.

Miss Guenther bent and kissed the child twice, neither on lip or brow, but on the beautiful, sightless eyes. Erne Halstead's look at that moment she never forgot. Daisy dropped her brown curls wearily on his shoulder.

"Talk," said the little voice.

"Have you been here long?" asked Miss Guenther?"

"Since last evening," she answered.

She drew a quick breath. Inquiries for the family would come next, she knew.

"My father is quite ill—he sees no one. Did you leave your friend in town?" carelessly.

"Vaunce? Yes."

He looked at her keenly. Perhaps he had a glimmering of something strange under the smooth face of the open countenance; she thought so, at least, for the moment, and thrilled suddenly. His gaze was withdrawn.

"I came away with a bountiful supply of gossip, but I fear much of it has escaped me. What can I tell you of town?"

A thousand things pleasant to hear while she sat there in the sunshine, looking off toward the sea. The poplars rustled, the blue tide receded from the shore, Daisy fell asleep on "Nea's" shoulder, and Aunt Dilloway awoke from her nap in a fauteuil by the parlor window, wondering if Ethel had bowled herself to death, and why, if still in this sublunary sphere, she did not come and dress for dinner.

Aunt Dilloway turned from a prolonged gaze through the windows, to find the truant standing in the door with a scarlet vine in her hand, her proud face aglow, a belle, a bright, untamed beauty again, instead of the joyless thing she had been for weeks.

"My love, do you know what time it is?"

"Time for Marie, I dare say."

"And you in a morning dress, with your hair straight back behind your ears!"

"Come from your long, long roving
On the sea so wild and rough—
Come to me, tender and loving,
And I shall be blest enough,

sang Miss Guenther, and she fled with the winding thread of her own music, throwing back a laughing glance at Aunt Dilloway from radiant eyes.

Later that day, when the westward-slanting sun had brought out everybody to the piazzas, the beach and the boats, that same tender love song came leaping up the staircase, and a clatter of little high-heeled boots came with it. Mr. Guenther, sitting in his easy chair by the window, turned his pale, wasted face eagerly as the door opened.

"Where are you going?" cried Aunt Dilloway, all alert, and smoothing her point-lace ruffles.

Miss Guenther's bronze braids were shadowed by a black helmet hat, crested with fleecy plumes whiter than sea foam, and the dark dress and slender kid gauntlets furthermore arrested Aunt Dilloway's attention.

"To sail. I came for you."

"Who is going?" said Aunt Dilloway, curtly.

Ethel rested her hand on her father's chair and smiled down into his face.

"Belle Vaughan, Lieutenant Harding, Mr. Halstead, a few new arrivals and Aunt Dilloway."

"I couldn't think of it," said Aunt Dilloway.

Mr. Guenther took the dainty hand lying on his chair and looked from the window silently. Halstead was pacing up and down under the poplars, with a cigar between his lips and Miss Guenther's shawl over his arm.

"Who is that?" he asked, sharply.

Aunt Dilloway moved in her chair. A latent resolution sprang up to her thin lips.

"An artist from New York—the name is Halstead. Be careful of taking cold, Ethel, and don't stay out after the sun is down."

The tiny boots clattered down the stairs, Aunt Dilloway saw Erne Halstead assist her into the boat, saw it shoot out into the bay, followed with her eyes the glimmer of that plumed hat till it shone a mere speck far out on the water, and then, sitting there in the stillness and quiet with that weak, broken-hearted man, she wrung from him, by her earnest, womanly pleading, more of the reason of their sojourn at the Crags than Ethel, dearly as he loved her, could ever have done. Poor Aunt Dilloway!

The boats came back at twilight. Halstead's was the last. Miss Guenther leaped ashore with large, triumphant eyes. He was to remain at the Crags for weeks and the Guenthers for months, it might be. This was the beginning of the end.

Aunt Dilloway soon saw it, but she kept her counsel. It all came about very naturally. They met every day—in the parlors, on the shore, in rowing, bowling, riding. Many a long twilight Ethel stood looking out on the shore and thinking of Mac Vaunce's words regarding the Halsteads. Had she not learned to believe in him as he bade her?

There is no love so dangerous as that which steals upon us unawares, like a thief in the night; none so hard to eject as that which has gained possession of its red ground before the unlucky owner has dreamed of its presence. Erne Halstead awoke one day and made the above discovery.

It had been a day of languor and heat. Belle Vaughan and Harding, the West Point lieutenant, had gone down to the shore with Miss Guenther and taken Daisy with them. Harding lay sunning his handsome figure on a shelving ledge and protecting his complexion with Miss Vaughan's parasolette, Miss Vaughan herself at a respectful distance with a distracting Spanish hat on her black braids sat turning over in rapturous admiration a portfolio of idle sketches by Halstead—desolate black cliffs, with white drowned faces in the surf at their base; weird, purple horizons, spotted by fleeting phantom sails; an Indian shore, with one lonely palm tree, and a ghastly moon rising over its coral reefs; a dismantled mast surging out of a pitchblack sea, and one white sea bird perched upon it, watching over the wreck—these, and a hundred other wild, strange fancies.

"Ethel Guenther, what a genius the man is!" cried Belle. "I am more than half in love with him."

Harding sulked under the parasolette.

"Daubs! you are always in love with some one!"

Belle tied her hat in majestic scorn. They were two quarrelsome lovers.

"Sour grapes, Mr. Harding. Don't trouble yourself as long as I am never in love with you."

"Perfidious!"

Daisy, who sat with her thin, transparent hand in Miss Guenther's, listening to the advancing tide, said innocently:

"Everybody loves Nea."

Belle laughed.

"Especially the feminine portion of humankind, dear. Be so kind, Mr. Harding, as to refrain from poking crabs with my parasolette."

"Be so kind, Miss Vaughan, as to refrain from praising other gentlemen in my society; it jars upon my feelings. How are you, Halstead?"

From a jagged crag above, Erne Halstead swung himself down dangerously near the prostrate lieutenant.

"Here's a scene. It's sweet doing nothing. I heard my name, Miss Vaughan, and came to answer to it."

"You did?" said Belle, rising up; "how very fortunate! I was just wondering who would go down the shore for sea-mosses with me."

"I am going!" said Harding, savagely.

"Oh, indeed!" said Miss Vaughan, shaking out her dress, carelessly, "just as you please; come, Ethel."

"Don't!" pleaded Daisy, clinging to her.

Miss Guenther shook her head at Belle.

"We will wait here."

"And the mermen will carry you off—two little beauties like you!"

Daisy passed her thin hand softly over Miss Guenther's face.

"Is she a beauty, Nea?"

"Yes," said Nea, gravely, in spite of Miss Guenther's quick flush.

Belle laughed and kissed her hand to Ethel, as she bounded down the rock; Harding stalked after her.

"Come!" said Belle.

"I will return in time to stop the mermen," said Erne, with a long, reluctant look.

Daisy sat thinking of it, as their steps receded from the beach. It puzzled her awhile, then she struck a new track.

"Do you love Nea, Miss Guenther?"

"Not as you do, Daisy."

"Not at all?" persisted Daisy.

"Little inquisitive, lay your head against me and hear the tide come in," said Miss Guenther.

The sun dipped down to the west; the roar of the surf at the base of the ledge began to grow louder and louder. Daisy's head fell into Miss Guenther's lap, she was very quiet for a long time. Ethel put back the drooping curls, at last, and found she was fast asleep. Little frail Daisy, it required but little foresight to see how soon it would be withered.

Miss Guenther was content to watch the gulfs and clouds for awhile in dreamy silence, holding the sleeper; then a gradually increasing uneasiness came over her. She began to wonder where they had gone for the sea-mosses, and how soon they would return. She threw her shawl around Daisy and held her closer to her, listening for footsteps, but nothing could be heard but the tide.

How lonely the shore had grown. The sun set in a lurid bank of scarlet and tan-colored clouds. She would wake Daisy and go home. They had been perched on that rock for more than an hour.

Miss Guenther rose up, with the blind child clinging to her, not more than half awake.

"My God!" she cried out suddenly.

A quivering black line of water had crawled up to the rim of the rock where they stood. The path in the sand by which they had come—the rough ascent they had climbed, were gone. Over her rose the harsh boulder; at her feet and on each side the water hissed and gurgled hungrily—they were cut off by the tide!

It was not for herself that the sharp pang of fear smote her; it was for Daisy—poor, helpless Daisy, who knew nothing but that she was very tired and very frightened because Nea had not come back.

"Come home!" she said, pulling Miss Guenther's dress. Ethel caught her to her with a great cry.

"It is wet here—I feel the water," said the child.

The spray struck heavy in her curls and dashed upon Miss Guenther, as she stood shielding her, white to the lips, and her large eyes upturned for some avenue of escape. There was a little shelf in the rock just above her. Quick as thought she lifted the child to it. Aid might possibly come—at least, it was all she could do.

The water crept up and up. Ethel was dizzy, blinded. Daisy's little frightened voice calling to her was lost in the roar of the surf. Quick crowding thoughts, coming as they come to the dying, broke upon her like the waves. Oh, life was sweet, and she so beautiful and young!

A shout rang down from the rock above her. She looked up with eyes that saw all things dizzily. Daisy had disappeared, and over that rocky shelf the face of Erne Halstead looked down, pale as marble—he was hanging to the ledge further up, with his foot in a fissure, clinging to the rock and bending to her his hand.

"Quick!" he cried, in a voice like thunder.

She sprang upon the shelf. His arm closed around her close as death. She felt herself drawn up, slowly, surely.

For life—for more than life! Yes, she clung to him, and the strong arms bore her up like iron. They stood on the firm earth, she looking up blankly into his pale, handsome face, and Harding running off toward the hotel with Daisy—safe! Then Erne Halstead caught her desperately to his heart.

"Ethel, darling! darling! Did you want to die?"

"Oh, no," she said, tearfully.

"Lay your hands in mine—here, and your head on my heart!" he cried, with his passionate face aglow.

The cold, white hands crept into his—the sumptuous head nestled down to his breast—one long, deep kiss, and they stood confessed under the red evening star just lighted in the twilight.

Presently the stage drove up to the hotel and disgorged a few passengers. One was sitting on the piazza with his chair tipped back, smoking carelessly, as Miss Guenther and Halstead came up the steps. They paused a moment in the shadow of the poplars, her hand on his arm, her bewildering face upraised to his—happy, careless lovers. A dry cough floated across the piazza. Ethel turned.

A pair of dark, subtle eyes shone like coals of fire behind the lighted cigar and seemed burning into her very heart as he rose up. She caught Halstead's arm convulsively.

"How are you, Halstead?"

"Miss Guenther, I am charmed to see you."

She bowed icily, the pride in her white face keeping down its fear, and ignored the hand he held out to her.

"How came you here?" said Halstead, good naturedly. "I thought you were at the springs."

"I followed your footsteps, my boy—I had business, too, with Mr. Guenther—I trust he is well?"

"On the contrary," said Ethel, firmly and haughtily, "he is too ill to receive visitors or to transact business of any kind."

"But mine is imperative and I have but a day to devote to it," answered Vaunce, with exasperating coolness. "Halstead, if Miss Guenther will be so kind as to excuse you, and you will take a turn on the beach with me, I will enlighten you as to my coming to the Crags."

Ethel turned like a princess. The hour of ruin had surely come—her dream was at an end. She caught the last look of both—Vaunce's cool and exulting; Halstead's wondering, but unutterably tender; then she climbed the stairs to her own room, blindly, and threw herself prostrate on the floor, with her face in the dust.

It grew dark. Footsteps came up from supper; dresses rustled on the balconies—a thread of talk and light laughter stole in through the shutters. Presently some one knelt beside the prostrate girl and lifted her up.

"My dear! my dear!" cried Aunt Dilloway.

Ethel pushed back her hair with a long, shuddering sigh.

"And you have been drowned, almost, and I never knew a word of it," said the aghast lady.

"Aunt Dilloway, Mac Vaunce is here."

"I know it—I have seen him."

Ethel sat down on the foot of the bed facing Aunt Dilloway.

"What is to be done?"

"Nothing," said Aunt Dilloway, wringing her hands, "unless, indeed, you marry him, Ethel!'

"Aunt Dilloway, I am engaged to Erne Halstead!"

"Ethel!"

Mrs. Dilloway rose up and went to the window hurriedly—her face was pale with pain; then she came back and stood before Ethel.

"My child, he is the man above all others who ought never to have crossed your path!"

"Why?"

"Why! Oh, my poor girl, do you know why we fled this place from Mac Vaunce?"

"I know," cried Ethel, clenching her small hands, "that my father has done some wrong, and that Mac Vaunce has knowledge of it."

"It does not matter how soon you hear the story—the world will know it tomorrow—God help us!"

Ethel caught her arm.

"And the wrong—what was it?" fiercely.

"My dear, my dear, it was a crime! John Halstead had been our tried, tried friend for years, and so suspicion turned from our door first of all. I have lived years since then under your father's roof, but Ethel, I never knew the truth till today!"

"What is it—what is it?" cried Ethel, mad with impatience. The tears fell hot on Mrs. Dilloway's cheek.

"A great forgery, child, which startled the whole city, committed on John Halstead. It was years ago, but I remember it as if it were yesterday. The forger was never discovered. John Halstead was ruined, and went down to the grave in poverty, leaving to Erne and that blind child only the legacy of his wrong. My poor Ethel!"

Not a word or motion from the still figure on the bed.

"Your father had lost large sums of money—bankruptcy was staring him in the face—he was tempted and fell! A man was arrested for the crime—a clerk in Halstead's office, but there was no evidence to convict him; it was the brother of Mac Vaunce. Now, what can we hope from him?"

Aunt Dilloway laid her hand on Ethel's bowed head. They were silent for a long time.

"If you refuse to marry Mac Vaunce," said Mrs. Dilloway presently, "tomorrow he will proclaim our ruin to the world. You know now that Erne Halstead would never marry you—and your father, Ethel, it will kill him!'

Ethel rose up, interrupting her with a quick gesture—her eyes maddened, her face blanched with its own despair.

"I will marry Mac Vaunce!" she cried out.

It was a cruel, pitiless thing! Her aunt's face darkened with remorse.

"My dear child, what can we do?" she said.

"Go away—leave me!" answered Ethel.

"But, my love"—

"Oh, do go!" like a cry.

Her aunt opened the door reluctantly. Some one leaning against the wall near it, waiting with folded arms and very pale face, turned eagerly.

"Mr. Halstead!" she cried, aghast.

"I know all," he said, hurriedly. "Can I see her?"

"No," answered Mrs. Dilloway, putting him kindly back. "You cannot see her; you must never see her again, Mr. Halstead."

"Never! Great God! What do you mean?"

"Erne, she can never marry you. What has Mac Vaunce told you?"

"She shall never marry any one else, Mrs. Dilloway. Told me?—a story of some crime long concealed—some family disgrace. What is that to me? Do you think it will alter my love?"

He did not know, then. Mrs. Dilloway drew a deep breath.

"Good night," she said, turning away; "it will end tomorrow."

She meant the tangled skein of surrounding circumstances. Yes, but human foresight is dim at best.

Mrs. Dilloway watched by Mr. Guenther's bedside the whole night through. He had grown too weak and ill to be left alone now, and in this hour, above all others, she knew her place was there with him. Mac Vaunce's arrival at the Crags had not been whispered there—he lay sleeping as unconscious of the presence of the avenger as if there had been no crime to avenge.

"I cannot tell him till tomorrow," Mrs. Dilloway said.

Looking down in his face by the lamplight, she sat and thought of what he had done—of the remorse that had made him an old man in his prime, and her tears fell down on the gray hair. It was not for her to judge him; they were brother and sister, and he had been kind to her all her life.

Once he awoke and called her by name. She bent over him.

"Forgive," he murmured feebly, and that was all.

Somewhere near midnight Ethel glided in, white and noiseless. She knelt down and kissed the sleeper on cheek and brow and hair. Neither did she condemn him. He sighed a low, tremulous sigh, like that of infancy, and turned his face to the wall.

Ethel departed as she came; her aunt fell asleep, with her head on the pillow. The "wee sma' hours" crept on apace; the day-star shone on the sea and a light wind sprang up and tinkled the foam bells along the shore. Mac Vaunce stood waiting for his triumph outside the door; but in that chamber there were no more sighs to be breathed—the sleeper lay there still and motionless, with his face to the wall.

"My father will see you now, Mr. Vaunce," said Ethel Guenther.

Vaunce turned quickly in his promenade through the hall to find her at his side, her desolate, dark eyes watching him through tears.

"Ethel," he cried out, "I love you madly. What I do, my love has goaded me into—remember it!"

She answered him not a word but this:

"What you do, Mac Vaunce, must be done quickly."

He followed her into her father's chamber. A figure lay upon the bed, stark and stiff—the eyes closed, a sheet spread above it to the face—able to meet accuser now and foil him—able to bear all blame, all disgrace, punishment! Mr. Vaunce was too late.

"My God! He is dead!" he cried out, staggering to the wall.

"Yes, he is dead," said Erne Halstead, who stood at the foot of the bed; "and, Vaunce, I have learned the remainder of your story. As I hope to be forgiven of God, do I forgive this man all the wrong he has ever done me or mine. It may rest with him in his grave."

Vaunce made a slight gesture.

"You," said Halstead, "who was the only one who ever suspected him, have hunted him to his death. You may tell the world his story, or not, as you please, but he has left me that which would recompense me for a thousand wrongs."

He opened his arms to Ethel. Mrs. Dilloway sprang between them.

"You cannot mean it, Erne! Stop—think!"

He put her gently by, with his eyes fixed on Ethel.

"Have you ceased to love me, Ethel? I am calling you to your home."

She sprang into his arms and sobbed on his heart like a child. He pressed her to him convulsively.

"Mine above all earthly things! My recompense—my wife! We will bury all that has been, out of our sight forever, and set our love to blossom on its grave."

That was what the morrow brought to Mrs. Dilloway.

They buried Mr. Guenther at the Crags. Erne Halstead and Ethel went abroad—Ethel as a stately and magnificent bride. She had been her father's sole heir. There were no more struggles now with the world for the husband she worshiped, but the grand one of fame. Wealth they had and in abundance; and for their deep and deathless love, what should follow it, but an equally deep and deathless happiness.

Daisy's grave was made in Italy. She died under the blue sky of Florence, in Ethel's faithful arms. They love Italy for her sweet sake.

That was how Erne Halstead's wrong was righted.

THE END.

SPIRIT OF THE BEAST.

Killing of Harmless Denizens of Wood and Field Denounced.

One of the curiosities of popular passions is to be perceived in the attitude of many well meaning persons toward animal life—"the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth," says the New York Tribune. They appear to regard such life, especially in its canine and feline forms, as sacrosanct. In their sight it is a cruel thing to kill, mercifully and expeditiously, the vagrant creatures which prowl about our streets.

Even though the cats be half starved, and the dogs many and crippled, and all of them homeless and the prey of mischievous boys, their right to live must be respected. As for using any animal for the surgical researches and experiments which have so enormously alleviated human ills and which are still so essential to the effective progress of therapeutic science—that is an abomination in their eyes.

At the same time some—of course, not all—of these supersensitive zoophilists regard with complacence and even with delight the destruction of other animal life for far less worthy purposes. The killing of the harmless and happy denizens of field, forest and water for the sake of "sport" is not to be forbidden. It is all right to pull fish from the water, even if you do not need them for food, and to shoot birds, and to see deer and rabbits pursued and killed by dogs. But to kill a creature just to end a life of suffering to itself and offense to the community or for the sake of securing a great boon for humanity, is shocking.

It is not easy to determine to just what extent animal life is to be regarded as sacred. The moral and religious philosophies of the world have differed greatly on that point. Professor Darwin and others would have us believe that vegetable life also is endowed with perceptive senses and perhaps with the consciousness of suffering. The infliction of needless pain upon animals is obviously to be condemned. So is the useless destruction of animal life, just for the gratification of a lust for slaughter.

CORDIAL CHICAGO CHURCHES.—Chicago pastors of leading churches are fearless of their wealthy communicants, and members of such congregations are cordial in their greeting of shabby strangers, according to the observation of the Rev. John Thompson of the McCabe Memorial Methodist Episcopal church, who has completed a five weeks' secret investigation of nine big churches of the city, in which he wore the disguise of a poor man. Charges sometimes heard against the churches to the contrary, Mr. Thompson asserts, are entirely false. "Preachers in the wealthiest churches are not afraid of rich men in their congregations," said the minister. "The gospel is preached in Chicago in its purest form and without taint of servility. In all the churches I visited there was fearless preaching of righteousness."

☞ The song of the bird was originally a cry of alarm.

Miscellaneous Reading.

BIBLES NOW IN 500 LANGUAGES.

More Sold Than Ever, Despite Growing Disbelief.

Despite the fact, which officers of the American Bible Society freely acknowledge, that the reading of the Bible has much decreased among native born Americans, more Bibles are sold and read and more money is given for the work of the society than when everybody believed the Bible literally.

Last New Year's Mrs. Russel Sage offered the society $500,000 if it could raise an equal sum during the calendar year. The money is rolling in, and the society sees the million in hand by January 1. The day after Mrs. Sage's offer was made public a New York business man called up the office and said:

"You can put me down for $50,000 if you won't give me my name."

A couple of years ago another New York business man entered the office and said: "I believe in the Bible. I am also very much interested in the Mohammedan races. I will give you a piece of property if you will dedicate it to the end of time to the circulation of the Bible among the Mohammedan races." The offer was accepted and the property, a New York office building worth $100,000, was turned over to the society.

The distribution of the Bible to the inhabitants of the earth's surface is practically a work of the last century only. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Bible existed in only fifty languages. Today in round numbers it exists in 500. The Bible went into more languages during the nineteenth century than in the eighteen previous centuries.

A few weeks ago an item appeared in the papers to the effect that the American Bible society had completed the publication of the Bible in Chamorro, the chief language of the Island of Guam. Thus the natives got their first printed book, their first alphabet, a written language and a literature all in one.

All over the world men are doing the same thing. Scores of the world's languages have been supplied with an alphabet and a written form by the translators of the Bible.

Last year, for instance, the society printed a Bible for Pleasant Island. Few persons would know where to find Pleasant Island on the map. It is a mere dot in the Pacific, 300 miles south of the Caroline Islands, with a population of 1,500; the sort of island one reads about in ship wreck stories.

For ten years one lone missionary and his wife have been living there. He learned the language by ear and then set it on paper phonetically. Then he translated the New Testament into it. Then he begged and entreated the Bible society to publish the Bible. The society replied: "We can't afford to publish the Bible in a language spoken by only 1,500 people."

Then the tribe pledged itself to pay for the work if it could have time. So the society sent the missionary a printing press and he and his native helpers set up and printed the work. Then he sent it to San Francisco, the society paid for binding it, and one more little South Sea Island has a written language and literature.

Philologists of the future will study extinct languages by means of these Bibles. Already it is said that Mame Matteo de Turner's version of the Gospels in Quichuea is the only key to the language of the Incas.

Americans have translated the Bible or portions of it into thirty European tongues, forty-three Asiatic, eleven African, nine Oceanic and twelve American. American women have made translations into fifteen languages, the names of which are unknown to the educated public.

In many cases the Bible is all that will preserve native American language from extinction. Only last year the society published the four Gospels in the Winnebago tongue. There are only 2,000 Winnebagos left. Their children are all learning to read English. In another generation the tribe will be extinct or assimilated. But some one offered to pay for the work for the sake of a few old Indians who would never learn to read English, and it was done.

Two copies of the Gospels in the Seneca language were sold within the past year, one in Arapahoe, four in Dakota, fourteen in Muskogee, twenty-five in Ojibway, one hundred and forty-six in Cherokee and two hundred and forty-two in Choctaw.

Down in Oklahoma the rich Indians, the Cherokees and Choctaws, take a racial pride in preserving their language from oblivion through the use of it in their church life. Although most of the adults read English now, they prefer to use the Bibles in their tribal tongues and only a few weeks ago a letter reached the Bible house asking if a new edition of the Cherokee hymn book could not be got out uniform with the Bible.

A notable instance of this tribal pride came within the past year in an order to print the Creek Bible, the expenses to be paid by the Creek Indians of Oklahoma and some of their white neighbors. Mrs. A. F. W. Robertson, a Congregational missionary, made a version of the Scriptures in the Creek or Muskogee language, the labor of many years. The order came to publish it after her death.

The board wrote, "Why do you go to such an expense as this when your children all read English? It is foolish." The reply came back, "We want it as a monument to Mrs. Robertson and the Creek language."

One year after its organization, in 1817, the society began the translation of the Gospels into the Delaware and Mohawk tongues. In August, 1908, an order came into the Bible house from a New York Indian for a copy of that old Mohawk Gospel.

It is a historical fact that in 1832, a little party of Indians entered the city of St. Louis, having walked 1,500 miles from a region now included in Idaho. They said they had heard that the white man had a book which was given him directly by the Great Spirit and they had come to learn about it. They were directed to Capt. William Clark, the explorer and Indian commissioner. He had no Bible to give them. The story when published resulted in the sending of Methodist and Catholic missionaries to the New Perce Indians and in the printing in 1871, of a New Perce Bible.

A Cherokee worked out a Cherokee alphabet in 1821, and by 1831 the society had published most of the Bible in that language. The greatest of all the Indian translations was the complete Bible in Dakota, the tongue of the Sioux, published in 1879.

Often the translator had had to create words as well as alphabets. How shall the dweller in some low lying atoll know the word mountain? How write "Lamb of God" for Eskimos, who know no lambs? "Little seal" the translator had to put it at last.

"Bad to eat" was as near as the translator into mosquito could get to sin. "Nice smell" had to serve as native Australian for frankincense. In Uganda the translator had to wait five years before he could catch a word that meant plague. Then one day he heard a man bewailing the influx of rats, such a "dibebu" they were. Out came the notebook, down went the long sought word.

How translate the Gospel into a language that has no words for city, marriage, wheat, barley, in which pig, rat and dog exhaust the zo-ological terms, in which the word for five is, "my hand;" for six, "my hand and one," and so on.

Then the revision. An American translated the Gospel of Matthew into Micmac for the Nova Scotian Indians. After all his long toil and faithful proof reading up from the south came the printed word, and he read the puzzling sentence. "A pair of snow shoes shall rise up against a pair of snow shoes." One letter wrong had changed "nation" into "pair of snow shoes."

But if for some races the translator had to create a written language for others he worked in fear of a criticism more learned than his own. The story of the Arabic Bible, the greatest of modern translations and the greatest of all Bibles in a non-Christian tongue, reminds one of Aldus and his Venice print shop.

The first task was a creation of a type which should pass muster with the fastidious and artistic Mohammedan scholars, who to this day prefer manuscript books to printed volumes. Including vowel points 1,800 different types are necessary to print an Arabic alphabet.

The creation of the steel punches with which to strike the matrices to cast the type in a form to disarm all criticism and their eventful casting at Leipsic, whither they were transported overland from Sytia, took five years. The whole work proceeded at the same rate. Every proof was corrected by the one hundred leading authorities in the world, Syrian, Arabian, American and European.

No Occidental can conceive the complexity of a page of Arabic proof, or the sight destroying of reading it. Men grew gray and lost their eyesight putting the work into type. From the moment of its inception to that of its final electrotyping in ten different forms, seventy-six years passed, and the American Bible society had spent $100,000 on it.

The result is the standard Arabic Bible which circulates all along the North African coast, across the Sahara to Timbuktu, and south to Niger and Mombasa. It is called for at the Cape of Good Hope, in Persia, Central Asia, India, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Yucatan and Brazil. Imported from Beirut it is the Bible used by Syrians in New York and Chicago.

One of the heroic tales of the society's annals is that of Bishop Schereschewsky, who, stricken with paralysis, pounded out a Chinese translation with two fingers on the typewriter. For twenty years preceding his death he was practically confined to an arm chair. During this time he translated the whole Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew into the Easy Wenli dialect of China.

He was unable to speak plainly enough to be understood by a Chinese scribe. He could not hold a pen, having only one finger on each hand under control. So he made the translation with these two fingers on the typewriter, and it was then copied by hand into the Easy Wenli dialect by a Chinese woman, Mrs. Wei. His original typewritten manuscript is now preserved in the Lenox library as a monument of one of the most stupendous literary undertakings ever made.

In ninety-one years of existence the society contributed 80,420,382 copies of the Bible. Last year it distributed 2,000,000. These Bibles are paid for in queer circulating medium sometimes.

Within its history the society has accepted dried cocoanuts, salt fish, knives, spoons, rugs, beads, cowrie shells, grass mats, bracelets, porpoise teeth, rice, sugar cane and South Sea Island money for Bibles. In little native boats the colporteurs creep down among the islands. By dog sledge and komatik in Alaska, by Buffalo cart in Borneo, camel in the Gobi desert, mule train and llama pack in the Andes, by elephant and straw thatched cart in Siam and native junk on Chinese rivers they push their wares. One white man and his wife floated 3,000 miles down the Lena river on an open raft with half a ton of Bibles, selling Gospels to the Yakuts in their own language.

Colporteurs distributed Bibles in twenty-seven different languages in the United States last year. They found negroes in the south who had never heard of such a book. They were kicked down stairs in tenement houses by free thinking immigrants. The society's colporteur among the Poles and Russians of the Chicago stock yards is Paul Glaser, who, was a member of the first Russian Duma in 1908, and by reason of that fact was banished to Siberia—where he did not go.

TIM KNEW THE LAW.—Tim was a protege of Mr. Blank, a well known lawyer. He was often in trouble, but by personal influence with the courts, Mr. Blank managed to have him let down easy, so it became a matter of talk that he did not suffer greatly in being arrested.

"How is it, Tim," some one asked one day "that you are arrested very often, but never go to jail or pay any fines?"

"It's just this way," Tim replied. "I have Mr. Blank for me lawyer, and what he doesn't know about the law I tells him."—Philadelphia Ledger.

☞ The criminal class of London number 700,000.

AT A SLAVIC WEDDING.

What It Costs the Groom to Entertain His Friends.

"I always feel sorry," observed James Perkins Gibbs, "for any friend of mine on his wedding day. I remember my own.

"Passing over the fact that the groom perspires during the ceremony, makes the responses in a quavering voice and acts like a dunce, while the bride, demurely self-conscious, pretty and pleased with the occasion and herself, is the whole show, I have always thought that the grooms I have known have been deserving of pity.

"In the first place, the groom has to buy a dress suit for the occasion, which he won't wear once a year afterward. Carriages, the present for the bride, flowers and the honeymoon put him back more dollars than he can afford. At the very time of all times when he should economize he has to blow himself. Then, after the honeymoon he has to foot the bills for setting up housekeeping.

"But now—I don't know. By comparison the grooms I have known are a pretty lucky lot."

"As compared with other grooms?" a reporter for the Plain Dealer inquired.

"The lady who condescends to wash for us," continued James Perkins Gibbs, "was recently a guest at a very elaborate function in Slavish circles. She told my wife about it.

"Her goddaughter, it seems, made an excellent match. The young man works in the blast furnace, earning $2 a day. His habits are exemplary, our washlady pointing out that he never gets drunk except on Saturday nights.

"When this estimable young man asked our washlady's goddaughter to be his wife he knew perfectly well the proposition he was undertaking. The young lady referred the suppliant to her parents.

"The lover satisfied the parents that he could pay in cash all the wedding expenses, so they gave the happy pair their blessing. The young man placed in the hand of his mother-in-law-to-be a lump sum and arrangements were immediately made for the wedding.

"I do not know how much it cost the young man or how long it took him to save it. I can only roughly estimate the cost from our washlady's account of the occasion.

"There were thirty odd carriages to carry the bridal party from the house to the church and back. There was a wedding feast at the house following the ceremony, and our washlady is authority for the statement that thirty-six chickens, nine large hams and one whole veal helped to make up the bill of fare. Also there were cakes, fruit, fish, soups and a few hundred loaves of bread.

"After the feast everybody adjourned to a hall, where there were seven barrels of beer, many quarts of whisky and a brass band. The dancing lasted two days during which time the guests ate and drank constantly. And it was the bounden duty of the groom to be on hand every minute of those two days and to act as if he was enjoying himself.

"The carriages, the wedding feast, the hall, the band, the liquid refreshments—everything was paid for by the groom. Not only that, but our washlady tells us that he also had to pay for the bride's wedding dress, which was of rich material and cost $25.

"Our washlady says the wedding must have cost the young man at least $300."

HOBOES EN ROUTE.

How They Travel About the Country Free of Cost.

One evening, after being driven out from under the "Overland Limited," we climbed into a boxcar loaded with lumber on a freight going east, writes a reformed member of the craft in the Bohemian Magazine. We closed the door, and after pulling some of the lumber against it in such a fashion that the brakeman looking for a rake-off (a dollar tax levied on tramps by train crews) couldn't open it, we laid ourselves upon the lumber. Soon the train began to get under headway, and at each jolt of the trucks, up and down, sideways and crossways, the lumber would follow suit, only a little harder, as before it had time to settle after each jolt the next one would send it flying into the air.

Poor Bobby! This was his first experience as a box-car tourist. He had often complained to me after riding underneath the limited flyers about the sand, cinders and rocks that were hitting him, but this ride was a new experience, and he groaned, "Oh, A No 1, I wish we could get out of this forsaken old rattlebox. Let's get off at the next stop and take the Overland." He kept on bothering me so much that I had to tell him that in the deserts passenger trains make mighty few stops, and that we might have to wait a week or longer at a lone depot before we could catch another ride; and that coyotes would make short work of us should they catch us after dark. Only by thus scaring him could I persuade him to wait until we reached the end of the division. The very next day, after being driven off at a lone water tank, we were forced once more to take a freight car.

We found this one loaded with large lump coal. Here poor Bobby suffered agony, because the coal, being packed solid to the floor, exactly responds to every jolt the springs of the car make, and as this kind of a load reaches below the centre line, the top of the car tumbles from side to side straining, creaking and groaning. Bobby was groaning, too, it was too much for him. He shouted to me, over the infernal noises: "A No. 1, that lumber car yesterday allowed us to lay at least flat on our backs, but these miserable coal lumps won't even permit this, and the racket is making me deaf."

But, poor boy, he didn't know there is a limit in tough box car riding, and that very night we had a chance to try this limit. We had climbed into a box car loaded with rough, coated pig iron. It's a bad proposition to ride and worse when the car is overloaded, as this one surely was. The springs seemed to have been forgotten when the car was built, and poor Bobby's lamentations were an unmistakable measurement as to what is the limit of misery in riding box cars.

He shouted to me over the jumping, thumping, racket-raising pig-iron bars: "Every bone in my body is aching, my insides are all broken loose, my back is all twisted, I can't stand, sit up or lie down to rest on these rough, jolting pig-iron bars. Don't you wish we had that coal car to ride again instead of this one?"